

New distributional information for birds in southern Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, and the first record of the Rufous Gnateater *Conopophaga lineata* for Uruguay

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Recent studies dealing with local avifaunas of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil (*e.g.* Bencke 1996a,b, Mähler 1996, Mähler *et al.* 1996, Mauricio & Dias 1996, 1998) have revealed important range extensions and new records for many species since the detailed distributional analyses of Belton (1984, 1985, 1994).

Here we present new records and range extensions for 20 species of birds along Rio Grande do Sul's southern coastal plain and adjacent southeastern hills. Most records are the result of intensive fieldwork conducted at Capão Seco (31°48'S, 52°20'W), an area of extensive marshes next to Canal de São Gonçalo; Granja Quatro Irmãos (32°12'S, 52°35'W), a cattle and rice growing ranch; Saco da Mangueira (32°15'S, 52°20'W), a shallow bay in the estuary of Laguna dos Patos; and Banhado do Silveira (31°55'S, 52°12'W), a transitional area of fresh and saltwater marshes, all in the municipality of Rio Grande. Apart from some prior visits to these areas, bird surveys at Capão Seco and Saco da Mangueira were carried out at least monthly from March 1997 to May 1999, while at Granja Quatro Irmãos fieldwork was conducted on at least a 15-day interval basis between late November 1997 and May 1999. At Banhado do Silveira fieldwork was conducted monthly from January 1998 until June 1999. Records from Cerro das Almas (31°47'S, 52°35'W, altitude *c.* 100–260 m), a small chain of granitic hills covered with semi-deciduous forest in the municipality of Capão do Leão, were obtained during fieldwork carried out almost monthly between March 1997 and April 1999. Other localities and fieldwork effort are dealt under the species accounts. Unless stated, the altitude of the localities from which new records were obtained is around sea level. Tape-recordings will be archived at Arquivo Sonoro Prof. Elias P. Coelho, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, RJ. Systematic order follows Sick (1997).

Species accounts

LITTLE BLUE HERON *Egretta caerulea*

Belton (1994) and Mauricio & Dias (1996) each reported two records of adults from Rio Grande do Sul. We recorded young birds (immature plumage) at Capão Seco as follows: one 31 May 1998, four 9 and 10 August 1998 and five 13 August 1998. August records were in company of Snowy Egrets *Egretta thula*, in an open, shallow, grassy marsh, and may have been the same individuals. Additionally, GNM recorded an adult with white inner secondaries on 18 June 1999 at Lagoa Capororoca (31°16'S, 51°03'W), municipality of Tavares.

JABIRU *Jabiru mycteria*

An individual observed on 30 April 1993 at San Churi (or São Marcos) dam, extreme western Rio Grande do Sul, the same locality where local residents claimed to have seen eight in 1992, constitutes the species' only authentic state record (Belton 1994). Belton (1994) also mentioned a specimen of unknown origin or date of collection in the museum of Universidade Federal de Pelotas (now Museu Carlos Ritter), apparently acquired with the 19th century Carlos Ritter collection. On 20 January 1997, at Granja Quatro Irmãos, an adult Jabiru was observed by RAD with 108 Wood Storks *Mycteria americana* and an immature Roseate Spoonbill *Platalea ajaja*, resting along an irrigation ditch in a rice field. This record suggests that Jabirus might reach Rio Grande do Sul with Wood Storks, which are summer visitors to the state (*sensu* Belton 1994).

COMB DUCK *Sarkidiornis melanotos*

Scarce resident of Rio Grande do Sul's central trough (Belton 1994) with only one record for the state's southern coastal plain (Mähler *et al.* 1996). A male, two females and an immature, recorded by RAD on 30 March 1998 at Capão Seco, resting next to open water in an area of grassy marshes mingled with sedges and reed beds, represents the second record for the coastal plain.

SWAINSON'S HAWK *Buteo swainsoni*

Previously reported from seven scattered localities in Rio Grande do Sul, records falling between October and February (Ihering 1899, Belton 1994, Bencke 1996b). However, Bencke's (1996b) record from Monte Alverne is questionable and may indeed refer to the White-tailed Hawk *Buteo albicaudatus* (G. A. Bencke *in litt.* 1999). At Granja Quatro Irmãos, on 12 December 1997, RAD observed three immatures flying northeast, and on 15 December 1997, recorded 23 immatures soaring above tractors ploughing the soil, now and then plummeting down to seize disturbed mice and frogs, which were eaten on the ground. Additionally, on 5 January 1999, an immature was seen soaring high over Granja Quatro Irmãos (RAD).

OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus*

Rare North American visitor to Rio Grande do Sul, with five records from the northeastern littoral and central trough in spring and summer (Belton 1994). On 27 May 1997, we saw one fishing without success at Saco da Mangueira. Later, on 28 July 1997, one was recorded there by GNM. Additionally, another individual was observed and photographed by RAD over Granja Quatro Irmãos on 3 February 1999.

YELLOW-BREASTED CRAKE *Porzana flaviventer*

Only once recorded in Rio Grande do Sul, at São Leopoldo (Voss 1977). On 28 August 1998, GNM observed one for at least three minutes foraging on a floating mass of *Salvinia auriculata* (Salviniaceae) among reeds at Pontal da Barra marsh (31°47'S, 52°14'W), municipality of Pelotas. Despite intensive ornithological surveys

conducted in the past twelve years at this site, *P. flaviventer* had never been previously recorded. Its appearance there could be related to a major flood in the region during late August 1998, after a week of intense rain.

SPOTTED SANDPIPER *Actitis macularia*

Previously known in Rio Grande do Sul from seven widely scattered localities in the state's northern half (Belton 1994). Observed by RAD at Barra do Chuí (33°45'S, 53°22'W), along mud banks and the jetties of Arroio Chuí, the Brazil-Uruguay border, on 24 February 1998 (one individual in non-breeding plumage), 10 and 12 April 1998 (one and four individuals respectively, with few spots on their breasts and flanks), 11 and 13 October 1998 (two birds respectively in non-breeding plumage) and 17 and 20 February 1999 (three birds respectively, with slight spots on their flanks). The species was not recorded from the area between 4 and 8 July 1998.

RUFF *Philomachus pugnax*

In the Americas, this Palearctic species is a regular visitor to Alaska, and vagrant in the remaining continental United States of America, Canada, Guatemala, Panama, Barbados, Trinidad, Peru, Venezuela (Hayman *et al.* 1986) and Colombia (Hilty & Brown 1986). For eastern South America, the only published records are those of Sick (1993) for Taim and Lagoa do Peixe, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, which were replicated by Belton (1994). However, the record from Lagoa do Peixe is a mistake and the only valid one is that for Taim, which was obtained by T. A. Parker and T. S. Schulenberg on 30 October 1985 (Pacheco in press). On 29 June 1998, RAD observed an individual among 4 Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca*, on the muddy edge of a marsh at Capão Seco. The bird had white lores, pale buff underparts (white throat, underneck and belly), pale buff-fringed scapulars, tertials and wing-coverts, and yellow legs, intermediate between the juvenile male and non-breeding male depicted in Hayman *et al.* (1986).

SPOT-WINGED PIGEON *Columba maculosa*

Previously known in Rio Grande do Sul from the state's western tip, where presumably present year-round, and also from the Uruguayan border area near Bagé and Herval, where recorded in June and July (Belton 1994). Two to four individuals, including one singing bird, were observed by RAD at Barra do Chuí between 10 and 12 October 1998, in an area dominated by low, bushy acacias close to the beach. Despite intensive surveys conducted by RAD between 22-24 February, 10-13 April, 04-08 July 1998 and 16-20 February 1999 at this locality, no further records were obtained.

ASH-COLOURED CUCKOO *Coccyzus cinereus*

Scarce species, recorded in Rio Grande do Sul from five widely scattered areas across the state's southern half (Belton 1994). A badly mangled corpse was found by RAD at km 53 of highway BR 392 at Capão Seco on 17 March 1997, an area with herbaceous vegetation and few corticeira trees (*Erythrina cristagalli*, Leguminosae)

in extensive marshland. On 25 March 1997, RAD recorded another individual at the same place among the corticeiras. Additionally, one was seen and tape-recorded by RAD on 27 November 1998, and another later seen on 27 March 1999, at Banhado do Silveira, in an area dominated by maricá trees (*Mimosa bimucronata*, Leguminosae) with a few corticeiras close to marshes. With the exception of a sighting in June, all other records from Rio Grande do Sul fall between 1 November and 4 May (Belton 1994), indicating that the species may be a spring-summer resident that leaves the state during the autumn, as records from Uruguay (Gore & Gepp 1978) and Buenos Aires province, Argentina (Narosky & Di Giacomo 1993) demonstrate. Furthermore, recent winter records from Brazilian Amazonia may be austral migrants (Sick 1997). Birds from Capão Seco were clearly in transit, since habitat is not adequate for the species, while records from Banhado do Silveira, where habitat seems more appropriate and extensive, were the only ones obtained in 17 months of fieldwork.

LITTLE NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus parvulus*

Known in Rio Grande do Sul from the central trough, the central-north sector and west of 55°W (Belton 1994). Two were heard singing by GNM at the edge of an *Eucalyptus* sp. grove on 24 November 1998 at 1940 h near the town of Capão do Leão (31°46'S, 52°31'W, altitude c. 40 m).

VIOLET-CAPPED WOODNYMPH *Thalurania glaucopis*

Belton (1994) recorded this species in Rio Grande do Sul from the central trough adjacent to the Serra Geral escarpment, extreme north along the Rio Uruguay and from an area north of the Rio Camaquã. This species was an uncommon to fairly common resident throughout 1995-1996 at Arroio Andrade forest (31°27'S, 52°28'W, altitude c. 300 m), municipality of Pelotas (GNM), and scarcer, but also found throughout the year at Cerro das Almas (GNM). Occasionally recorded in 1994-1997 at other forest fragments mentioned by Maurício & Dias (1998) in the municipalities of Pelotas, Morro Redondo and São Lourenço do Sul, with the exception of Parque Farroupilha. Our records extend the species' known distribution c. 100 km southwards, since Uruguayan records (Cuella and Gerzenstein 1962) have been contested (Cuella 1985).

WHITE WOODPECKER *Melanerpes candidus*

Known in Rio Grande do Sul from the northwest corner, isolated areas west of 53°W, São Leopoldo and the Pólo Petroquímico area at Triunfo (Belton 1994). One individual was seen by GNM in *Eucalyptus* sp. at Domingos Petrollini (32°00'S, 52°19'W), municipality of Rio Grande, on 6 September 1998. RAD observed one in the company of a Green-barred Woodpecker *Colaptes melanochloros* and a Field Flicker *C. campestris*, in *Eucalyptus* spp. at Granja Quatro Irmãos, on 4 January 1999, and later, on 26 January 1999, at the same spot, saw two individuals which chased a third one, tape-recording them. These are the first records for Rio Grande do Sul's coastal plain.

RUFOUS GNATEATER *Conopophaga lineata*

Prior to Mauricio & Dias' (1998) records from several localities in the municipality of Pelotas, *C. lineata* was known in Rio Grande do Sul only from the central trough northwards (Belton 1994). On 7 October 1997, at Passo do Centurião (32°08'S, 53°43'W), municipality of Herval, on the Brazil-Uruguay border, GNM tape-recorded two singing individuals and mist-netted another bird (photographed by G. Mastrantonio) in the gallery-forest of Rio Jaguarão. Two others were heard singing on the Uruguayan side of the river (Paso del Centurión) on this same date, representing the first record of this species for Uruguay. Farther north, also in the municipality of Herval, an individual was heard in a small woodlot (31°53'S, 53°05'W) near Rio Santa Maria on 17 December 1996. Additionally, GNM recorded this species throughout 1998 in small woodlots near Cerro das Almas. Furthermore, G. A. Bencke (*in litt.* 1999) recorded this species from Rio Grande do Sul's southeastern hills in areas intermediate between Mauricio & Dias' (1998) records from Pelotas and the central trough: Horto Florestal Ramos (30°28'S, 52°07'W), municipality of São Jerônimo, on October 1997; Serra dos Prestes (30°50'S, 52°34'W), municipality of Encruzilhada do Sul, on December 1996; and Passo da Guarda (30°54'S, 52°27'W), on the Rio Camaquã, in January 1986. Our records from Passo do Centurião extend the species' known distribution c. 100 km south-southwestwards.

SEDGE WREN *Cistothorus platensis*

Previously known in Rio Grande do Sul from five scattered localities (Belton 1994), Pontal da Barra marsh (Maurício & Dias 1996) and Estação Ecológica do Taim (Mähler *et al.* 1996). We recorded this species between January 1998 and April 1999 (except April 1998 when fieldwork was not conducted) in salt marshes of Saco da Mangueira. We also recorded it on 18 February, 29 July 1998 and monthly between January and June 1999 (except May, when fieldwork was not conducted) in salt marshes at Banhado do Silveira. One was seen on 24 February 1999 at Ilha da Feitoria (31°38'S, 52°02'W), municipality of Pelotas, in similar vegetation.

GUIRA TANAGER *Hemithraupis guira*

Belton (1994) recorded the species from the foot of the Serra Geral escarpment to the north and also from Itapuã. One male observed on 12 May 1997, as it foraged together with three Sharp-billed Xenops *Heliobletus contaminatus*, in the sub-canopy of Rio Camaquã's gallery-forest at Paredão (30°55'S, 52°57'W, altitude c. 100 m), municipality of Encruzilhada do Sul, represents the first record of this species for Rio Grande do Sul's southeastern hills.

MARSH SEEDEATER *Sporophila palustris*

This rare seedeater is known in Rio Grande do Sul from four scattered marshy localities in the south and west (Belton 1994) and from Pontal da Barra marsh (Maurício & Dias 1996). A male and female were seen by RAD on 29 November 1997 in a marshy area behind the coastal dunes, c. 12 km southwest of Cassino beach (32°11'S, 52°10'W),

municipality of Rio Grande, where a male was also observed on 19 November 1998. These records were the only ones in 20 months of fieldwork starting in October 1997. Furthermore, we recorded up to 6-7 males (one tape-recorded) and 6 female-plumaged birds along a 2 km transect walked on 13 February 1998 at the edge of Banhado do Maçarico (32°16'S, 52°12'W), also in the municipality of Rio Grande; none were seen here by GNM on 5 June 1998. On 30-31 December 1998, GNM saw five males at the same place, tape-recording the songs of two of them, including an immature. Both localities are part of an extensive wetland area characterized by the presence of sedges and reed beds lined with wet grasslands and mingled with sandy fields and swamp forests. This relatively isolated region, comprising 411.62 km² (Tagliani 1997), may be one of the most important areas for the conservation of this endangered seedeater in Brazil. Our new records, restricted to November, December and February, support the suspicion that *S. palustris* is a spring-summer resident in Rio Grande do Sul (Belton 1994, Maurício & Dias 1996).

LESSER SEEDFINCH *Oryzoborus angolensis*

Belton (1994) regarded this species rare in Rio Grande do Sul and reported it from five scattered localities, all from the central trough northwards. Mähler (1996) reported an additional record from Parque Estadual do Turvo, in the state's northwestern sector. On 17 January 1998, we heard one singing at a swamp forest (31°58'S, 52°12'W) bordering Banhado do Vinte-e-Cinco, municipality of Rio Grande. On 12 February 1998, six singing males were heard and one tape-recorded in swamp forests along a 2 km transect at Banhado do Maçarico. The species was not recorded on 5 June and 30-31 December 1998 at the latter locality, possibly due to the occurrence of strong winds on these dates (GNM). Our records extend the known range of *O. angolensis* c. 200 km southwards.

GREEN-WINGED SALTATOR *Saltator similis*

Previously recorded in Rio Grande do Sul from the state's western, northern and northeastern sectors (Belton 1994). One individual was tape-recorded in swamp forest amidst marshes at Ilha da Feitoria on 19 November 1997 (GNM). At Cerro das Almas, GNM recorded this species in September, October, November and December 1998 in capoeira and primary forest edges.

COMMON WAXBILL *Estrilda astrild*

Known in Rio Grande do Sul from the metropolitan area of Porto Alegre, Novo Hamburgo, the Pólo Petroquímico area at Triunfo and north of Pelotas, the first records dating back to the early 1960s (Belton 1994). We observed this species regularly throughout the year since 1994 in urban and suburban areas of Pelotas, although we have previous undated records from the mid-1980s onwards. The first published record from Pelotas was based on S. Lanyon's observation of a small flock on 14 December 1986 in a village N of the city (Belton 1994). R. Baltar (pers. comm. 1997) states that *E. astrild* was present even earlier around Pelotas, for he

found nests in citrus trees in 1969. This species is always found close to human habitation, favouring abandoned grassy gardens and fields. Flocks were usually of 5 – 10 birds, but concentrations of up to 40-50 were not rare, especially in February and March, when many immatures joined these large groups. *E. astrild* was formerly a very popular cage-bird in Pelotas and this introduced population originated from individuals which escaped from captivity; some local range expansion may be in progress. We additionally recorded *E. astrild* at São Lourenço do Sul (31°22'S, 51°58'W; two on 13 December 1996); Capão do Leão (31°46'S, 52°31'W; two on 25 June 1997); the campus of Universidade Federal de Pelotas (31°48'S, 52°24'W; some heard on 1 July 1997); Saco da Mangueira (12 on 30 June 1997) and Vila da Quinta (32°04'S, 52°15'W; three on 18 February 1998).

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New and noteworthy bird records from Santa Catarina state, Brazil

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The avifauna of Santa Catarina was little known until 1978, when Helmut Sick was invited to prepare a bird inventory for the state. Previously, only scattered data existed, principally from collecting expeditions undertaken in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (e.g. by Berlepsch, Kaempfer and Underdown). Several avifaunal lists have since been prepared for the state (Sick *et al.* 1979, 1981, Bege & Marterer 1991, Rosário 1996). Thus at present, Santa Catarina is, along with Rio Grande do Sul (Belton 1984, 1985, 1994), the only Brazilian state possessing a detailed distributional review of its avifauna.

The Santa Catarina avifauna originates principally from three different sources. Coastal and northern areas exhibit strong affinities with the highly endemic avifauna of the Serra do Mar (see Cracraft 1985). In the south of the state, typical pampas species, e.g. many waterbirds, Rallidae, Wren-like Rushbird *Phleocryptes melanops* and Many-coloured Rush-tyrant *Tachuris rubrigastra*, are the most obvious feature, and are similar to the avifauna of much of interior Rio Grande do Sul. Finally, Planalto taxa, including several *Araucaria* specialists and relict species that arrived during the last Cenozoic glaciations from the Andes and Patagonia (Sick 1985), are an important constituent of the avifauna of western Santa Catarina and the campos (grasslands) of the eastern serras.

Here, we present new and noteworthy avifaunal records for 37 species from the state, including 11 species not previously recorded in Santa Catarina, 12 species of conservation concern at either national or global levels, principally species considered